

# Village Matters



Autumn-Winter 2010

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Liz Thomson Head of Lettings

This newsletter brings you only good news! Contrary to all the predictions of a roller coaster year in property we have seen nothing but increases in sales and lettings and a recovery of values all around. As usual we want to introduce you to a few more of our friends in the local community – both old and new! Like the team at Up Box who are old friends doing great new things and then there is the fabulous new Deli on Abingdon Road which you simply must seek out for culinary treats. For the fifth year



Michael Wilson Head of Sales

running we sponsor Kensington Chelsea Music Society in what is their 50th Anniversary season. Last but not least we have introduced you to a couple of establishments who have been on the block a lot longer than us all – read on to learn more about the village where you live!



## The fabric of life

As Liz Thomson, our Lettings Director, has shopped at De Winter Limited near Notting Hill Gate Tube station for more than 25 years, it's safe to say they're part of the furniture. This longstanding family business that started in 1925 is well known for its immense array of competitively priced fabrics, blinds and wall coverings. "We are never knowingly under-stocked and provide traditional and contemporary fabrics," says Howard Berger MD of nearly 25 years.

De Winter, one of the oldest businesses in the area, has been in Kensington Church Street since 1947 and its current spot since 1963. Seven loyal staff – Celia, who runs the tapestry section, has been there for 35 years, and resident designer Nigel 25 – help people select materials and items on the premises, and will measure, advise and install on site.

A number of local luminaries have bought furnishings for all seasons, including Virgin entrepreneur Richard Branson. "We did up two of his houses in Holland Park and he was terrific, stopping work and tending to us like no one else was there," says shop manager Shaun Donnelly, who has been there for 37 years.

De Winter Ltd, 223 Kensington Church St, W8 7LX 020 7229 4949



Howard Berger MD

## A box of delights...

As much as you appreciate your local cafes and delis, sometimes it's nice to have something new and different to eat at lunchtime, or in the evenings for that matter. What could be more fun and good for you than a box of fresh, seasonal themed food delivered straight to your home or office?

The niftily-named UpBox, or urban picnic box, started by Nick and Ines Alfille, clients of Mountgrange Heritage, is a takeaway gourmet food box. The name came about, says Ines, "because we wanted to be cheery and look up in life, which is what people need now. We provide a decent meal for those who really enjoy food that's been sourced locally."

Even better, the menus change every week and many come from the staff, including the chef's cherished recipe for banana cake. Themed boxes make potentially hum-drum lunches surprising, from Moroccan chicken marinated in homemade harissa and yoghurt, to British salmon and tarragon cream dressing, and a special hot vegetable curry with sweet potatoes, chickpeas, spinach and spices.

UpBox has an outlet at Clapham Junction station and its boxes can also be found in Kensington's Wholefoods. At only £6.50 for each generous-sized box, you can easily afford your urban picnic.

020 8968 7514 [www.up-box.co.uk](http://www.up-box.co.uk)



A SLICE  
OF CHERRY  
FRANGIPANE  
TART – SEE  
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## What are values doing in the village?

We've had an extraordinary few months at Mountgrange Heritage with some truly outstanding sale prices and unprecedented levels of new tenancies being agreed. In our last newsletter we made reference to the sense of concern regarding the impending emergency budget and the potential increase in Capital Gains Tax. In fact, as we predicted, the impact of the emergency budget was negligible. CGT has increased not to 40% or 50%, as was feared, instead sits at a more reasonable 28%. However, 2011 will bring an increase in transaction costs to the property (continued on page 2) ►



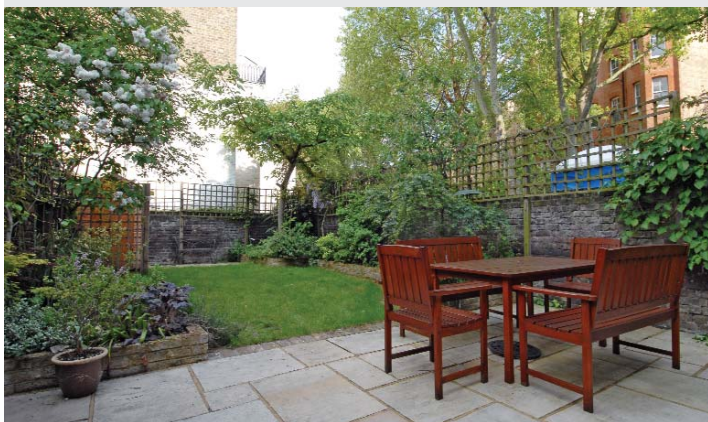
**SOLD** Newton Road, W2 £4,500,000



**SOLD** Kensington Gardens Square, W2 £599,950



**SOLD** Abingdon Road, W8 £3,600,000



**SOLD** Earls Court Road, W8 £1,275,000

Our Sales Department has been extraordinarily busy and achieved some outstanding results for our clients. If you are considering selling your property and would like honest, accurate advice please call or email us to book a FREE valuation.

## MOUNTGRANGE HERITAGE

► (continued from front cover) market, with VAT increasing to 20% and Stamp Duty increasing to 5% for sales over one million pounds. The shift in Stamp Duty could spark a flurry of transactions before the change comes in to effect; so if you own a property with a value between one and three million this could be an excellent time to sell.

In spite of economic considerations the love affair with central London residential property is as strong as ever. The stability in our market is delivered by buyers from all walks of life and every corner of the globe. We are just as comfortable working with bankers or artists as we are with nationals or internationals – after all, it's this tapestry of people which makes our village such a special place to reside. ●

## Great Dane

It's quite hard to walk past the shop front of Paere Dansk next to our Stratford Road office without peering through the windows for a glimpse of the fine Danish furniture on display.

Danish-born Oliver Olsen opened the shop that specialises in vintage Danish rosewood furniture in 2004 and his collection is particularly well suited to the homes of the capital. "The pieces that were designed in the 50s and 60s were made with a view to fit into contemporary apartments. With limited space in London homes, Danish furniture that is lower, smaller and modular is ideal."



As well as providing vintage furniture, Olsen says he's happy to make bespoke pieces of certain designs that are either created in-house, or based on a previous Danish design. "You can choose the wood and size, which suits a number of families who want something for open plan living spaces."

Call Oliver Olsen for private appointments on 07771 861939  
Paere Dansk, 13 Stratford Road W8 6RF [www.paeredansk.com](http://www.paeredansk.com)



## Bloom busters

With the government encouraging us to work beyond the official retirement age of 65, they might want to sign up Donald Rider as its pin-up boy. At 91 he's still running the ultimate town and country garden emporium, Rassells, on the Earls Court Road flanking Pembroke Square.

Rassells has been operating on this spot since 1902, where Donald started as an apprentice in 1935, working there ever since (bar six-and-a-half years when he was away during World War II).

"I took over the place when I was 35 and know all our regular customers," says Donald. "I try to stock as much as I can and if I don't have something, I'll get it in."

As well as the nursery catering for those in town, pots and containers that suit terraces and roof gardens, it also sells plants for



weekenders to take to their country homes. Tastes evolve and Donald claims to have introduced Impatiens (Busy Lizzies) into Britain in bulk, discovering them in a blaze of colour in a Swiss park. "I was sent a sample of each one, gave them to a tame grower to multiply and planted them out in Pembroke Square." The popularity of this colourful plant grew from there... pardon the pun!

Bulbs are in stock now at Russells, one of the few places where you can buy them

loose. "They're not pre-packed, so you can buy one, 10, or 100 of 400 different varieties."

Estate agents are always writing to Donald wanting to sell his land and premises, but as one of the original traders in the road, he's not about to sell or retire in a hurry. We have his centenary to look forward to and many more years of Russells in the neighbourhood.

Russells Nursery, 78-80 Earls Court Road, W8 6EQ 020 7937 2153



## Capital comestibles

For those longing for a friendly, local café with urban bite that isn't part of a big conglomerate, it's worth hunting down the latest eatery in Abingdon Road, just round the corner from our Stratford Road office.

Nouvelle Delicatessen, a blend of all that is good from France and Italy, has just opened, and in the interests of research, we felt compelled to sample two hot paninis with smoked and mozzarella cheese, Parma ham, olives, sun-dried tomatoes and pesto, and frothy full-bodied cappuccinos.

Owner Juliano Cane has kitted out the café in smart monochrome, with a cheery, red wall behind the counter. He's provided plenty of seating for those who want to relax with the papers and nibble on a slice of cherry frangipane tart, or sample a heartier fish or meat dish.

The shelves are aligned with hard-to-resist Italian biscuits, pasta, olive oil, truffled polenta and rice, and the best truffle mustard this side of Paris and Rome, the finest basis for an easy-cook supper.

Open from 7.30am to 6.30pm 020 7938 2523

Nouvelle Delicatessen, 69 Abingdon Road W8 6AW



## Masters of plaster



Butcher Plasterworks, providing an impressive collection of mouldings and an invaluable resource for anyone bringing a period property back to life, was started in 1948 by Mr Butcher using his RAF gratuity to fund the firm.

(Continued on back page) ►

...values that you'll love



**LET Westbourne Park Road, W2** £725 per week



**LET Oxford Gardens, W10** £800 per week



**LET St James's Gardens, W11** £2,250 per week



**LET Cleveland Square, W2** £1,500 per week

Our Lettings Department has had the most successful summer ever and are looking to continue this success into the autumn. So if you are considering renting your property please call, email us or pop into one of our offices to book a FREE valuation.



# Spot the wall competition

Morpheus is the Greek mythological God of Dreams; but this wall is no illusion. So where in the village have you seen it? First correct answer out of the hat on 31st November wins a hamper from Nouvelle Delicatessen. Email us now with your answer to [win@mountgrangeheritate.co.uk](mailto:win@mountgrangeheritate.co.uk) before 31st November.

## Turning Japanese

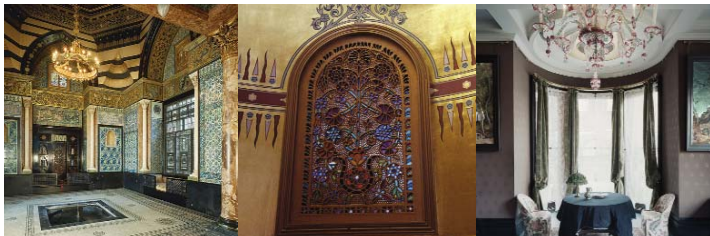
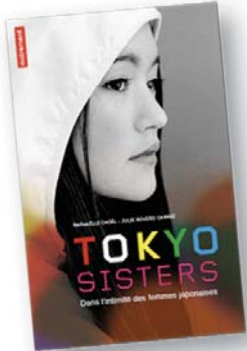
Sisters are doing it for themselves, as journalist Raphaëlle Choel and her colleague Julie Rovero-Carrez discovered when they carried out hundreds of interviews over several years with Japanese women for their newly released book, *Tokyo Sisters*.

The book chronicles the lives of Japanese women from the ages of 15 to 60, with anecdotes collected around a table over a few beers, at a nail bar, and even in a love hotel. Choel, one of Mountgrange Heritage's tenants, says the trick was for the writers to be there, but for the Japanese women not to notice their presence.

The book is split up into different themes, including education, work and passions, says Choel, who describes one of her favourite stories. "It is about how a Japanese woman became disillusioned with French men and France, which she thought was her dream world. When she arrives in Paris, the taxi driver is unpleasant, it is pouring with rain and she doesn't get to meet her French lover. I felt ashamed that everyone was so rude to her – in Japan, there is a huge amount of respect for people."

Choel is pleased with the support she is getting for *Tokyo Sisters* at London's French bookshops, particularly Librairie

La Page at 7 Harrington Road, SW7 3ES where she will be doing a book signing on 20 November from 2pm - 8pm. For more information call 020 7589 5991.

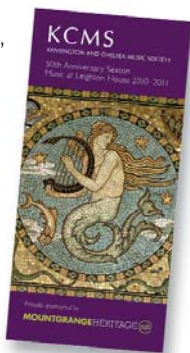


## Music at Leighton House

Following a £1.6m refurbishment project, Leighton House has reopened with the original fabric of the building repaired, the interiors redecorated and original features restored. This has enabled the Kensington and Chelsea Music Society to return and continue the tradition of music at this fabulous location.

In this its 50th Anniversary year KCMS are pleased to present a new season of seven concerts. The first recital is on Wednesday 20 October with Laura Samuel, violin, and Luis Parés, piano, playing works by Debussy, Beethoven and Franck. This is followed on Tuesday 20 November by an evening of piano pieces with Catalina Butcary. The season continues in the New Year with concerts in January, February, March, April and May.

As part of our commitment to the area, Mountgrange Heritage are delighted to continue to sponsor KCMS for the fifth year running and you can pick up a Programme with full details of all the concerts at either of our offices. Alternatively you can get further information from the Society's website. [www.kcmusic.org.uk](http://www.kcmusic.org.uk)



The Finzi Quartet will play at Leighton House in May 2011

► (Continued from page 3) With the capital's architectural heritage badly damaged during the Blitz, there was great demand for fibrous plaster to renovate columns, arches and moulded ceilings" says Robin Ellis who bought the business in 2001. "I've always done business with Butcher Plasterworks through my design and construction company and Butcher's nephew Ron, who ended up running the place, asked if I'd be prepared to take it on. Fascinated by their work, of course I said yes."

One of the few remaining plaster works in Britain, we can only thank Robin for taking on the task. Butcher Plasterworks has an interesting array of clients, including Buckingham Palace, the Bank of England, Royal Academy of Arts, Queens Lawn Tennis Club and Selfridges. The masters of plaster even came up with a complex 3-D scheme for Alexander McQueen's flagship London store.

"Good plasterwork is an absolute delight" believes Robin "and with a shortage of good craftsmen in the UK, we take on apprentices to keep the profession going."

"We can send samples and show people around the workshop. Fine plasterwork is not only a great job, but I think it's incredible value too," adds Robin.

For more information visit the website or call Warren Ringer on 020 7313 6509.

Butcher Plasterworks,  
Westbourne Yard,  
103 Westbourne Park Villas W2 5ED  
[www.butcherplasterworks.com](http://www.butcherplasterworks.com)



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